

# Storm Water Program Frequently Asked Questions

KEEP THE STORM DRAINS CLEAN FOR THOSE DOWNSTREAM

*Storm drains are used for quickly diverting storm water away from urban areas to prevent flooding and water damage.*

## What is storm water?

Storm water is the runoff that occurs with natural precipitation such as rain or snowmelt.

## What is a storm water inlet?

A storm water inlet can be a curbside opening or a grate that drains storm water from streets, yards, and sidewalks.

## What is the difference between a sewer and a storm drain?

A sewer system is a collection of underground pipes that routes domestic sewage from homes and other buildings to a wastewater treatment plant. Storm sewers, on the other hand, are not usually routed to a treatment system. Instead, they convey runoff through open drainage ditches and underground pipes and empty directly to the ground, streams, or ponds.

## What pollutants are found in the storm water?

Soil and dirt, trash and debris, cigarette butts, oil and grease, and metals are prevalent pollutants found in storm sewers. Storm drains are used for quickly diverting storm water away from urban areas to prevent flooding and water damage. However, when these pollutants are washed into streams, ponds, and rivers, water quality can be harmed. The following tips are useful in preventing water pollution.

## Storm Water Pollution Prevention Tips:

### Car Care

- ◆ Inspect your car for leaks.
- ◆ Repair leaks promptly.
- ◆ Recycle used oil and filters at AAFES gas station or Autocraft shop.
- ◆ Use drip pans and funnels when changing fluids.
- ◆ Dry sweep floors instead of wet washing.
- ◆ Wash cars with a bucket and sponge, not a running hose.

### Spills

- ◆ Keep a spill kit in your garage.
- ◆ Clean up spills immediately.
- ◆ Properly dispose of waste material.
- ◆ Do not rinse the spill area with water.

### Pet Waste

- ◆ Clean up after your pet.
- ◆ Dispose of pet waste by flushing, burying, or trashing.

### Drains

Avoid sewer backups with these tips:

- ◆ Do not put fats down the drain.
- ◆ Containerize fats for trash disposal.
- ◆ Use sink strainers.

### Lawn Care

- ◆ Follow label directions.
- ◆ Buy only amounts of lawn chemical needed for the job.
- ◆ Determine application area and mix only the amount needed.
- ◆ Spot treat when possible.



*Improving Storm Water Quality*

### Yard waste

- ◆ Promptly pick up leaves, pruned limbs, and other yard waste from your sidewalks, lawn, and driveway.
- ◆ Compost or mulch yard waste, or take to special drop off for yard waste.
- ◆ If other options not available, bag yard waste for proper disposal. Do not blow grass clippings or leaves into ditches or streams.

### Storage

- ◆ Store chemicals in locked storage areas.
- ◆ Store pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in original labeled containers.
- ◆ Store like chemicals together.
- ◆ Keep containers tightly closed.
- ◆ Do not flush hazardous items down the drain.
- ◆ Tightly seal paint cans and store upside-down to allow a seal to form around the lid.

### Household hazardous waste

- ◆ Turn in household hazardous waste on special pickup days regularly scheduled by the installation environmental office.

- ◆ Do not pour hazardous products on the ground or into gutters or storm drains.
- ◆ Donate usable paint, solvents, automotive fluids, pesticides, fertilizers, and cleaning products for reuse.
- ◆ Use nontoxic (or less toxic) alternatives when possible.

### Improving Storm Water Quality

- ◆ Prevents water pollution.
- ◆ Improves fishing and boating.
- ◆ Maintains recreational swimming areas.
- ◆ Prevents diseases from contaminated seafood and swimming in contaminated water.
- ◆ Preserves natural beauty of streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

### Keep the Storm Drains Clean For Those Downstream

Contact the Fort Hood Environmental Division, (254) 287-6499.



*Improving Storm Water Quality*